

Jersey Boys

By Lorraine Viade, Psy.D.



Jersey Boys is the movie version of the hit play about the life and loves of Frankie Valli and the musicians who made up the Four Seasons. I saw the play and loved it. The movie is well directed by Clint Eastwood and entertaining from start to finish. Although the very end was not needed and detracted from the impact of the ending, I imagine that the goal was to give fans of the stage production a little taste of theater in-between the movie and the credits. While *Jersey Boys* is no *Dreamgirls*, there are charming characters, particularly in the guise of Christopher Walken as the mob boss who protects Frankie because of his promise, his talent and his loyalty. There is a line in the film that can be applied to any situation: "Everybody remembers it how they need to."

The plot is all-too-familiar when dealing with the record industry. Unknowns make it big, problems arise between the group members and each must decide what is important and what he wants to do for himself and those he loves. *Jersey Boys* at the heart is about friendships that are betrayed and loyalty that is sustained. The definition of family is expanded to include those we bond with over a shared love. In this case, music was the glue that held them together but money the evil that broke them apart. In the end, commitment to friends and to promises makes *Jersey Boys* a good movie. You have to admire Valli for how he handled both the fortune and the misfortune in his life. He seems, by this account, to be a decent man who just did the best he could.

I remember when Frankie Valli came out with *Can't Take My Eyes Off Of You*. I almost wore the vinyl off the record. No matter how good the actors who play Valli might be in sounding like him, no one comes close to reproducing his voice. There hasn't been another like it since. As you listen to the real Frankie Valli sing out the credits, you'll know what I mean. This is a good matinee movie, but I think the play version is really worth seeing because, there, you get more of the impact of the music and are less distracted by the sets and the clothes and the cars from the movie version. Either way, *Jersey Boys* is worth your time. I give *Jersey Boys* three hits for the film, and one for the nostalgia.

